**Content Standard**

A content standard regulates the nature of a collection catalogue and allows the “systematic means of retrieval of items in a collection” (Bowman, 2003, p. 6). The importance of selecting the most appropriate content standard for our particular collection was clear. Accordingly, in researching potential content standards for our collection, a number of such standards were investigated including: AACR2 (**Anglo American Cataloguing Rules 2nd ed.),** RDA (**Resource Description and Access**), DCRM (**Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials**), DACS (**Describing Archives: A Content Standard**), & CCO (**Cataloging Cultural Objects**). Immediately DCRM, DACS and CCOstandards were found to be unsuitable for the collection in hand due to the fact that these standards are applied to specialised collections, i.e., archives, rare books, cultural objects.

AACR2 andRDAwere identified as the two most viable options and highlighted for further investigation. The investigation provided us with the necessary detail to assess both comparatively in relation to our needs. AACR2 as a cataloguing standard is the most widely implemented standard internationally (Bowman, 2003). At the heart of AACR2 is provision of bibliographic detail for collections of a print majority. AACR2 enables recording of bibliographic access points, such as author, title, etc., guiding resource retrieval for the user (Bowman, 2003). There are a wealth of texts and manuals on this standard providing instruction in its implementation. As a group we all had some experience in working with AACR2 as content standard.

RDA is similar to AACR2 in that it also regulates bibliographic access points for a collection catalogue, sharing many of AACR2 principles. However, it provides for digital collections also, as a standard being attuned to the networked environment of the web (Oliver, 2010). It is also internationally recognised or interoperable and may be implemented outside of a library context (Oliver, 2010). For these reasons RDA is seen as advancement over AACR2.

In light of the research a decision was made to implement AACR2 as a content standard for our collection. AACR2 was identified as more than sufficient as a content standard to provide for our collection - a majority print based collection for a secondary school library. RDA with its provision for digital resources offers a *potential* advantage over AACR2 for some collections; however, this potential advantage did not factor enough in relation to our collection to warrant a selection. Additionally ACCR2 being a tried and tested cataloguing standard leant weight to the selection decision. Bowman states that a content standard allows the cataloguer to “bring order to the arrangement” (2003, p. 6) of a catalogue, thus AACR2 has been identified as the means through which to order our collection catalogue.

**Bibliography**

* Bowman, J.H. (2003). *Essential Cataloguing.* London: Facet.
* Oliver, C. (2010). *Introducing RDA: a guide to the basics.* New York: ALA.